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20 September 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: General Research and Development (Aircraft)
Initial Approvals, FY 1967

1. This will be the fourth year that we (OSA) have participated in budget submissions to the NRO. I must admit that it has been somewhat like watching the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. Although I recognize it may be a case of perceiving the obvious, I feel it may serve some useful purpose to at least record this Agency's (OSA's) participation in the NRO as regards R&D.

2. To recap briefly, the years FY 1963 and FY 1964 saw the beginning of the decline in our participation in the NRO/R&D program to a point when in FY 65 all R&D money requested by the Agency was withheld with the exception of the Camera R&D money in IDEALIST. In FY 1966 this Agency received no exclusive R&D funds in the initial approvals.

The one major exception to the above is that during FYs 1964, 65, and 66 the [redacted] continued to be funded by the NRO, primarily because it had been recognized as the most imaginative [redacted] being undertaken in the U.S. Government. It seems a rather easy task to draw an analogy between the previously mentioned lack of R&D funding and the build up of the NRO Staff.

3. One of the more obvious questions that should be asked is how, quite suddenly, has this Agency been stripped of its technical competence. This is particularly pertinent if one reviews the Agency's performance in the area of R&D over the past ten years (at the risk of looking back to the "good ole days").

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Such a review would include such programs as the U-2; OXCART; CORONA; [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] all of which were in one way or another opposed or at the very least criticized by representatives of DOD. Their success speaks for itself.

4. Discounting the Agency's past performance and looking to our present situation, the NRO Agreement as signed on 11 August 1963 by the DCI and the Deputy Secretary of Defense specifically states, "...Funds shall be adequate to insure that a vigorous research and exploratory development effort is achieved and maintained by the DOD and CIA to design and construct new sensors to meet intelligence requirements aimed at the acquisition of intelligence data. This effort shall be carried out by both CIA and DOD." With this as background, it is interesting then to look at the statements accompanying the initial R&D approvals for FY 67. They are as follows:

a. Laser Scanning Cameras - "...In this connection, substantial effort by the DOD is already in progress to advance the technology of Laser Scanning Cameras. The results of the approved studies and the progress in technology will be compared at an appropriate time to determine if further effort is necessary."

b. High Resolution Visual Cameras - [REDACTED] is approved for conducting studies to review measurements that have been made using the X-15 on atmosphere and boundary layer limitations."

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c. Laser Investigation - "Efforts are now in progress....These efforts under Navy sponsorship should be reviewed to determine whether application in any specific vehicles is desirable."

d. Multi-Spectral Photography - "Deferred pending receipt of a comparison of the work being proposed with the work being conducted by NASA."

e. Image Scanning Processing - "The work now in progress under sponsorship of the Air Force and NPIC should be monitored."

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f. Supersonic IR Window - "Deferred in order to assure maximum use is made of the development of supersonic window being sponsored by the Avionics Lab at Wright Field."

5. Certainly, any R&D efforts undertaken by this Agency should be reviewed for specific duplication of work within the DOD. As a matter of fact, one of the hallmarks of this Agency in its R&D efforts has been its ability to extend or apply imaginative innovations to work being undertaken in the DOD and achieve considerably greater results (for specific application), not to mention more expediently. The individuals in this Agency who are engaged in R&D efforts have in the past and will continue to review work being performed in the DOD to assure themselves and the reviewing offices within the Agency that no such duplication is taking place.

6. In summary, if extensive justification to and cross-examination by the NRO Staff for our R&D programs vis-a-vis DOD's is the "new era", then OSA can certainly stand up to the challenge. However, I feel the central issue as outlined in paragraphs 4 and 5 above should be settled first in the hope that this may not be necessary. Either way, "guidance" is needed.

/s/ []
Chief, Management Analysis and
Reports Division, OSA 25X1

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